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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 06 ROME 000504

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE

PASS TO TRANSPORTATION SECURITY ADMINISTRATION (TSA) AND
GENERAL ACCOUNTING OFFICE (GAO); DEPARTMENT ALSO FOR
S/ES-O, S/CT, EUR, DS, AND CA

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SUBJECT: TURIN 2006 WINTER OLYMPICS: USG SITUATION REPORT
(SITREP) #13, 02/19/2006

REF: ROME 503

1. (SBU) The following cable provides information on security, public diplomacy, and consular activities in Turin, Italy, for the 2006 Winter Olympic Games.

2. (SBU) The interagency Olympic Security Coordination (OSC) Office can be contacted on a 24-hour basis at the following numbers:

USG Joint Operations Center (JOC): 39-011-55-99-793/794/564
(tel); 011-39-011-55-99-590 (fax)

USG Threat Integration Center (TIC): 39-011-55-99-790/791
(tel); 011-39-011-55-99-590 (fax).

3. (SBU) Attached is a key for USG acronyms used within this cable: the inter-agency Olympic Security Coordination Office (OSC); the USG inter-agency Olympic Security Operations Center OSOC, including the 24/7 Joint Operations Center (JOC) and Threat Integration Center (TIC); the Overseas Security Advisory Council (OSAC); the National Information Center for the Winter Olympics (CINO), which is a Government of Italy (GOI) hosted multinational center; the Turin Olympics Organizing Committee (TOROC); the International Olympics Committee (IOC); the US Olympic Committee (USOC); the Transportation Security Administration (TSA); Public Affairs/Public Diplomacy (PA/PD); Consular Affairs (CA); and the Italian Ministry of Interior (MOI).

KEY EVENTS

4. (U) Olympic events took place without disruption on 02/18/2006. Large crowds were drawn to downtown Turin to celebrate Olympic Night, a TOROC-sponsored event featuring free concerts, tasting sessions for local cuisine, and a movie marathon. Most restaurants and bars remained open throughout the night. Despite the number of visitors, the celebration occurred without incident.

5. (U) Italian Reform Minister Roberto Calderoli resigned his position on 02/18/2006, a day after rioting outside the Italian Consulate in Benghazi, Libya, resulted in 11 deaths. Calderoli, whose wearing of t-shirts printed with the controversial Prophet Mohammad cartoons prompted the violent Libyan demonstration, stated that he was resigning of his own accord, not because the Italian Government had demanded it. MOI officials informed OSOC that Italian diplomatic facilities around the world have augmented their security as a result of the Benghazi incident but that no additional measures will be taken at this time at Olympic venues.

6. (U) The second day of the "No TAV" symposium ended uneventfully on 02/18/2006. Italian law enforcement in the mountain region remain alert to the potential for protests, but it is unlikely that acts of violence will occur before the symposium ends on 02/19/2006.

SECURITY

Terrorist Activity/Threats:

7. (SBU) There is no reporting to suggest a specific, credible threat to Olympic sporting events or participants. Italian security forces remain alert to the potential for disruption by activist groups and OSOC continues to coordinate with Italian counterparts to identify activity that could impact on the safety of U.S. interests within the Olympic theater.

Demonstrations/Protests:

8. (U) On 02/18/2006, the Critical Mass bike ride occurred near Piazza San Carlo, location of the daily live broadcast of NBC's Today Show. The demonstration was peaceful and

uneventful. OSOC field elements were on hand to monitor the event and marked Italian police patrols were stationed there to prevent any disruption.

19. (U) Protesters conducted a pro-Palestinian/pro-Iraqi march through Rome on 02/18/2006; a U.S. flag was burned during the course of the protest. The groups conducting the march were fringe elements of the far left that are not recognized by the extreme left parties of the opposition coalition. Italian police estimate that 1500 people participated; the march concluded peacefully.

110. (U) The number of anti-Olympic protests in Turin has diminished in size and frequency over the past ten days. In a press conference on 02/17/2006, Italian Interior Minister Pisanu commented that the decrease was due to the stringent Italian security procedures in place for the Games, as well as the actions of local residents to discourage activity that could embarrass Turin and Italy. OSOC continues to work with Italian authorities to obtain information on protests and disruptive activity that could impact on the security and movements of U.S. athletes and spectators.

Incidents:

111. (SBU) According to OSOC representatives, on 02/16/2006, Visa International hospitality guests reported that two rooms in the Star Majestic Hotel in Turin were broken into; the thieves absconded with credit cards and personal items worth approximately \$4,000. One guest reported that she noticed three people wearing TOROC jackets at the time of the incidents, though there were no TOROC meetings scheduled. OSOC sent out an alert on the incidents to U.S. corporate sponsors in Turin. OSOC relayed the information to TOROC head of security for additional investigation.

112. (SBU) On 02/18/2006, OSOC field agents in the mountain venue of Sestriere reported that a hole had been made in the venue fence in order to allow a garbage truck to access the compound; the hole was located near the area used to lodge U.S. athletes. Security forces were not posted by the breach to prevent access to the compound and OSOC agents were able to walk unhindered through the gap. OSOC immediately contacted the head of TOROC security to report the problem and to stress USG concern about the security risks presented by the unguarded breach in the venue's zone of control. TOROC security quickly resolved the issue by positioning a vehicle to close the gap.

SECURITY OPERATIONS

113. (SBU) OSOC CNIO liaison received additional information from the MOI regarding the 02/17/2006 anonymous telephonic report of an attack against Olympic venues. According to the MOI, the unidentified female caller reported that she had overheard a conversation between two men in a bar, during which the men spoke about using a bus to conduct an attack against the Pinerolo Palaghaccio venue (site of curling). The caller claimed that the attack was due to occur at 1800 hrs that evening. Italian security forces immediately conducted a sweep of all Olympic venues, with negative results. Despite requests by international CNIO law enforcement representatives, the MOI does not plan to conduct additional investigation as the call was anonymous and could not be traced. OSOC CNIO liaison will continue to work with MOI counterparts to ensure that OSOC is made aware of any additional threats or incidents against Olympic venues or participants.

114. (U) According to Italian daily Corriere della Sera, on 02/18/2006, Italian authorities in Milan arrested a Tunisian on charges of illegal immigration after law enforcement personnel intercepted a phone conversation in which the subject stated that the Angel of Death would come for him on Saturday or Sunday. Concerned that the individual's comments may have been a reference to a potential suicide operation, Italian authorities arrested him as a preventative measure. The article provides no information as to why authorities were monitoring the Tunisian's phone line. According to Corriere della Sera, the detention was undertaken with cooperation from the Bologna prosecutor's office and the Carabinieri. Commenting on the arrest, Italian Interior Minister Pisanu noted that the matter is still under investigation and that the incident should not cause undue alarm. The Bologna prosecutor's office stated that the charges against the Tunisian could change if their investigation reveals evidence of subversive activity. OSOC is requesting additional information from the MOI through OSOC CNIO liaison.

115. (SBU) Anecdotal reporting by OSOC personnel visiting mountain venues suggests that transportation into and out of the mountains remains chaotic. According to the OSOC employees, they observed long lines of spectators waiting for

buses following Olympic events in Sestriere and watched as random buses were stopped on the road and people boarded with no attempt to check identification or tickets. OSOC will continue to work with Italian counterparts to determine how they intend to improve transportation and access control in the mountains.

VIPs

16. (SBU) The U.S. Ambassador to Italy is scheduled to leave Turin on 02/19/2006, following a three-day visit to attend Olympic events. The Ambassador's visit received no press coverage and occurred without disruption.

17. (SBU) The White House Delegation to the Closing Ceremonies, led by former New York Mayor Rudolph Guiliani, is scheduled to arrive in Turin on 02/24/2006. Press coverage in anticipation of the delegation's arrival has been minimal. OSOC is working with Italian counterparts to ensure that the delegation's visit takes place without disturbance.

PENDING MATTERS

18. (SBU) OSOC continues to work with Italian counterparts on the investigation of the theft of a TOROC vehicle pass.

PUBLIC AFFAIRS/PUBLIC DIPLOMACY

19. (U) The resignation of Italian Reform Minister Roberto Calderoli was the lead story in Italian media on 02/19/2006; commentary on the resignation was generally positive, as there has been broad spectrum political and popular condemnation of his actions. Italian Foreign Minister Fini's 02/18/2006 visit to a Rome mosque also received wide coverage, as it was well received by Roman Muslims and was supported by a broad segment of Italian society. Also featured prominently in the press was the 02/18/2006 phone call by Italian Prime Minister Berlusconi to Libyan President Gadhafi, in which Berlusconi emphasized the good relations between Italy and Libya. Berlusconi was also quoted in Il Giornale as hoping that Calderoli's resignation will pre-empt further retaliation against Italian companies and military forces abroad.

20. (U) Coverage of Olympic sporting events and of the Olympics medal winners continues to be generally positive. On 02/19/2006, Corriere della Sera and wire service AP focused on a blitz of anti-doping raids conducted against the Austrian Olympic biathlon and cross-country skiing teams. The raids, which failed to reveal the presence of illegal substances, were coordinated by the IOC, the Turin Prosecutor's Office and the Carabinieri. Il Giornale featured a story about TOROC's request for an additional 19 million Euro to fund the remainder of the Games.

21. (U) Security-related features continue to garner interest. Media coverage of Italian Minister of Interior Pisanu's 02/17/2006 press conference on Olympic security received positive comment in Italian dailies. (Pisanu stated during the conference that Olympic security was being well handled and that there would be no diminishment of security measures prior to the end of the Games.) On 02/19/2006, Il Giornale and Turin-based national daily La Stampa featured Pisanu's comments in Bologna following the Benghazi demonstration. Pisanu noted his concerns about political violence and stated that certain antagonistic groups will insert themselves into political rallies in order to conduct subversive acts. Il Giornale also commented on the Department of Public Security's request that security at all state institutions, including political parties, be augmented in light of the Benghazi attack.

22. (U) PA Olympics office continues monitor local media and press briefings on Olympics-related issues. PA is working to schedule media opportunities for the White House Delegation to the Closing Ceremonies, including at the reception planned for 02/15/2006. PA has also sent speaker program proposals to the agents of three U.S. Olympic athletes. The Public Affairs Office in Turin may be reached at 39-011-55-99-368.

CONSULAR AFFAIRS

23. (U) CA received two requests from American citizens (Amcits) for emergency services on 02/18/2006. One Amcit came to the Consular Office in Turin to receive emergency notarial assistance while another applied for a passport after his was stolen in Rome.

¶24. (SBU) On 02/18/2006, CA learned of two Amcits fined by police for selling Olympic tickets without proper TOROC licenses; one individual was stopped in the mountain venue of Sestriere while the other was located in Turin. Separately, OSOC field agents in Sestriere reported that Italian authorities had detained three Amcits on charges of unlicensed ticket selling. OSOC field elements are following-up to determine the status of the subjects and OSOC will work with CA to resolve the discrepancy between the numbers of Amcits allegedly detained.

¶25. (U) The Consular Office may be contacted at the following numbers: 011-5599-330 (tel.); 011-5599-551 (fax). Additional information may be found at <http://milan.usconsulate.gov>.
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